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# STATE OF TENNESSEE, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

D. G. GODWIN, Commissioner.

NASHVILLE, TENN., January 16, 1892.

DEAR SIR—I beg leave to call your attention to the following resolutions, adopted by the Less Cotton Convention, which met in Memphis, January 8:

*First.*—We recommend that this Convention do proceed to organize a permanent organization, to be known as the "Cotton Growers' and Merchants' Association."

*Second.*—We recommend that said organization shall consist of one President, Treasurer, and one Vice-president from each of the cotton-growing States.

*Third.*—We recommend that there be local organizations of said Cotton Growers' and Merchants' Association organized in every State, county, and town in the cotton-growing region, and that said local organizations shall, where possible and practicable, co-operate with any farmers' organization now in existence.

*Fourth.*—We recommend that the reduction in acreage planted in cotton for the year 1892 be twenty per cent. less than that placed in 1891.

*Fifth.*—We further recommend that each and every farmer or planter within said cotton-growing States do plant more diversified crops, and especially take extraordinary precautions to the end that he shall produce an abundance of corn, peas, hay, oats, and such other necessities for his own and his family's supplies. And we hopefully appeal personally and individually that each and every person favoring this movement do lend his aid and influence to further this end.

*Sixth.*—In view of the fact that the mercantile interest of the South is largely held responsible, whether rightfully or not, for the planting of cotton verging upon the exclusion of other products, it is therefore suggested and hopefully urged upon them to contribute by their advice and in other substantial ways to the bringing about of this coveted reform in our farming methods.

*Seventh.*—We recommend that a committee of five be appointed by the President, whose duty it shall be to draft such a constitution and by-laws as are necessary to carry into effect the objects of this organization.

*Eighth.*—We recommend that each member and delegate in this Convention use their united and individual efforts to carry into effect these resolutions, and that they urge their people at home to strive for a generally good carrying out of spirit and purpose of the same.

*Ninth.*—We further recommend that the address delivered by Col. J. R. Godwin be received and indorsed by this Association, and that same be published with the proceedings.

After the Convention had adjourned the following memorial was addressed to the farmers of the South by the Commissioners of Agriculture whose names are attached thereto:

The Commissioners of Agriculture representing the States of Alabama, Arkansas, North Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee, being impressed with the necessity of the reduction of the acreage of cotton, and the greater diversification of the crops for home consumption, hereby indorse the action of the Cotton Growers' and Merchants' Convention, held in the city of Memphis, Tennessee, on the eighth day of January, 1892, and do earnestly appeal to all agricultural and mercantile organizations, consisting of alliances, granges, State and county agricultural societies, boards of trade, cotton exchanges, chambers of commerce, etc., also individual farmers and merchants, to assist and co-operate with us in securing the foregoing results, and to this end recommend the general and local adoption of the action of the convention pledging themselves to a reduction of not less than twenty per cent. of the cotton acreage of last year. And we further urge and recommend the immediate organization of State, county, and districts or townships to act either independently or through already organized societies, as may be deemed best and will most readily insure the benefits arising from concert of action and decreased production of cotton for the year 1892.

John Robinson, of North Carolina; Hector D. Lane, Commissioner for Alabama; D. G. Godwin, Commissioner of Agriculture for Tennessee; M. F. Locke, Commissioner of Agriculture for Arkansas; Felix Corput, for R. T. Nesbit, Commissioner for Georgia.

Realizing the supreme importance of this movement to our farmers, and to all other classes, and recognizing the fact that any action, to be effective, must be taken promptly, I respectfully suggest and urge that you bring the matter before your Union at as early a date as practicable, and, if they approve the purpose in view, to pass such resolutions and take such other action as seems to them best. I am preparing to publish the proceedings of the Memphis convention as soon as possible, and will send you copies for distribution. In the absence of such publication now, however, it may be well to say that the meeting was a large and representative one, and was participated in by prominent farmers, merchants, and cotton men from nearly all of the Southern States. It is worthy of note that no class of men is in more hearty sympathy with the movement and is giving it more cordial support than the merchants, they being as enthusiastic as the farmers themselves. The Cotton Exchanges of many of our cities and towns, among them that of Memphis, were represented on the floor of the Convention by delegates, who did good work side by side with the farmers. I mention this merely to show that we may count on the support of all classes.

An erroneous idea as to our purpose seems to prevail in the minds of some persons, and it may not be amiss to state here that the intention is not to change from cotton to some other money-crop unless it appears that a gain would be made thereby, for in my opinion there are certain portions of our State where larger returns will be realized from a reasonable acreage of cotton than from any other money-crop. But the intention is to raise hog and hominy at the expense of cotton—to raise at home every thing necessary for home consumption, and then to raise cotton for our money-crop unless we are convinced that some other crop will pay better. This would be a long stride toward the welfare, independence, and prosperity of our farmers.

I would thank you to kindly inform me what action your Union takes in the matter, and beg to again urge upon you the necessity of acting promptly and before final arrangements have been made for planting the next crop.

D. G. GODWIN,

*Vice-president Cotton Growers' and Merchants' Association for Tennessee.*